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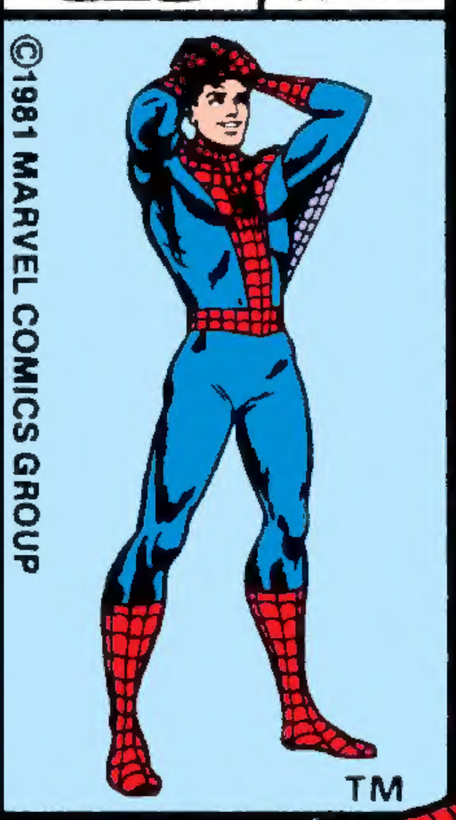

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN®

Miller/Wiacek

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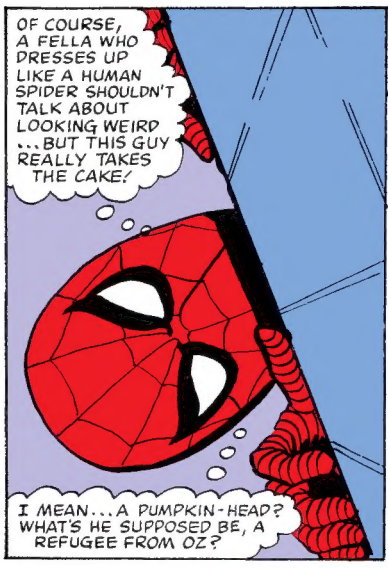
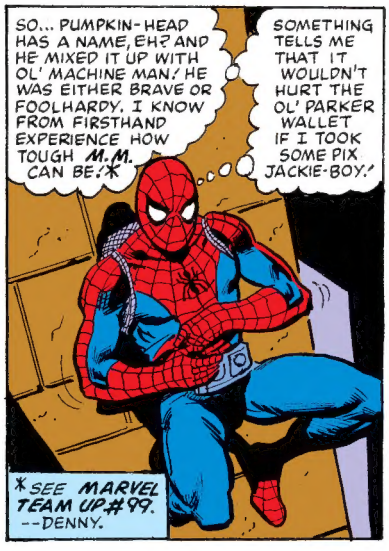
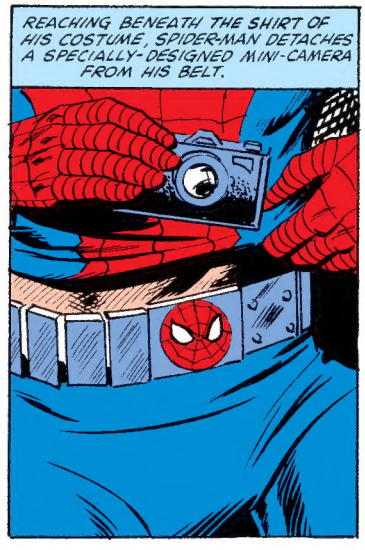
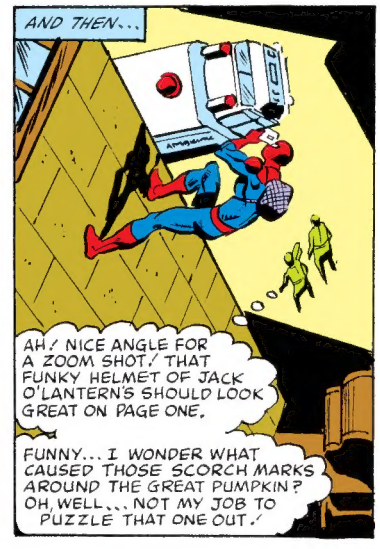

OF COURSE, A FELLA WHO DRESSES UP LIKE A HUMAN SPIDER SHOULDN'T TALK ABOUT LOOKING WEIRD ...BUT THIS GUY REALLY TAKES THE CAKE!
I MEAN...A PUMPKIN-HEAD? WHAT'S HE SUPPOSED BE, A REFUGEE FROM OZ?

LET'S HUSTLE, BOYS! THE WORD CAME DOWN TO GET THIS JACK O'LANTERN GUY INTO THE PRISON WARD ON THE DOUBLE!

THAT'S RIGHT-- AND MAKE SURE YOU KEEP AN EYE ON HIM! HE MAY BE UNCONSCIOUS NOW--
--BUT BEFORE MACHINE MAN TOOK THE FIGHT OUT OF HIM, HE AND HIS GANG HAD TAKEN OVER A WHOLE EMBASSY!

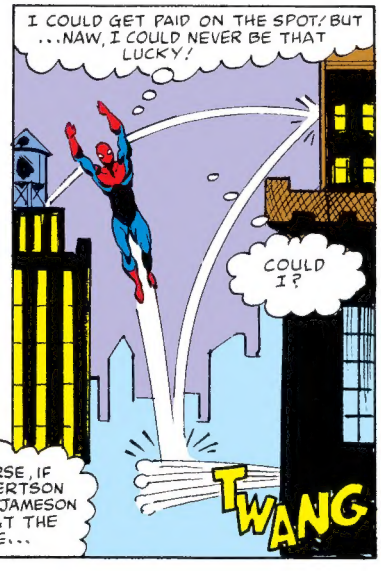

SO... PUMPKIN-HEAD HAS A NAME, EH? AND HE MIXED IT UP WITH OL' MACHINE MAN! HE WAS EITHER BRAVE OR FOOLHARDY. I KNOW FROM FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE HOW TOUGH M.M. CAN BE!*
SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT IT WOULDN'T HURT THE OL' PARKER WALLET IF I TOOK SOME PIX JACKIE-BOY!
*SEE MARVEL TEAM UP #99. --DENNY.


REACHING BENEATH THE SHIRT OF HIS COSTUME, SPIDER-MAN DETACHES A SPECIALLY-DESIGNED MINI-CAMERA FROM HIS BELT.

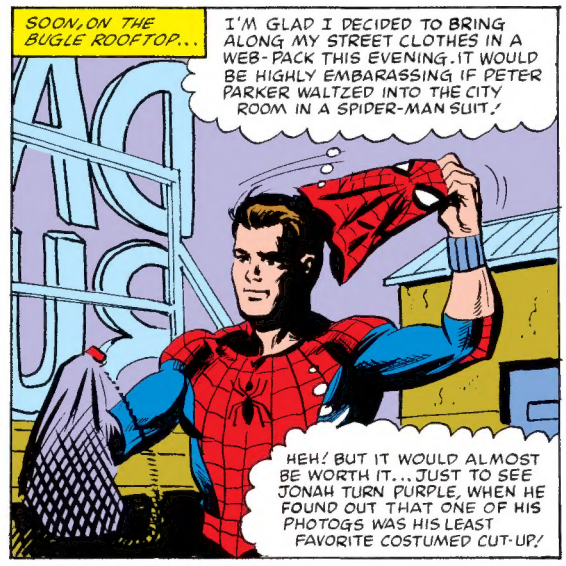

AND THEN...
AH! NICE ANGLE FOR A ZOOM SHOT! THAT FUNKY HELMET OF JACK O'LANTERN'S SHOULD LOOK GREAT ON PAGE ONE.
FUNNY... I WONDER WHAT CAUSED THOSE SCORCH MARKS AROUND THE GREAT PUMPKIN? OH, WELL... NOT MY JOB TO PUZZLE THAT ONE OUT!

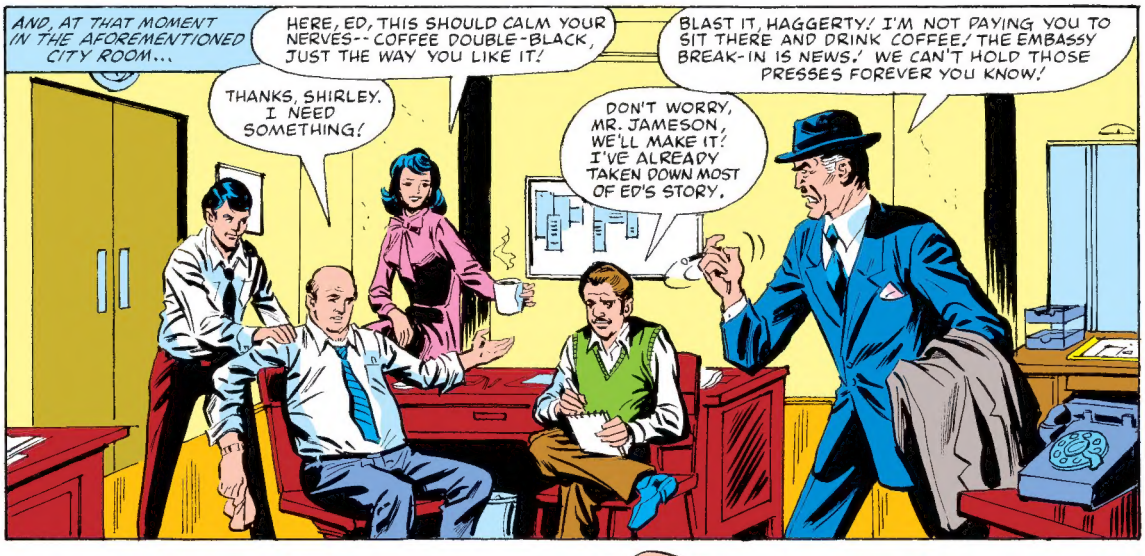
AND SOON...
HOW ABOUT THAT? THE USUALLY BAD PARKER LUCK SEEMS TO HAVE TURNED GOOD FOR A CHANGE! MY WEB-SHOOTERS ARE WORKING WITH NARY A PROBLEM--
THWIP
-- AND, IF I CAN JUST MAKE IT TO THE DAILY BUGLE BEFORE THEY PUT TOMORROW MORNING'S EDITION TO BED...

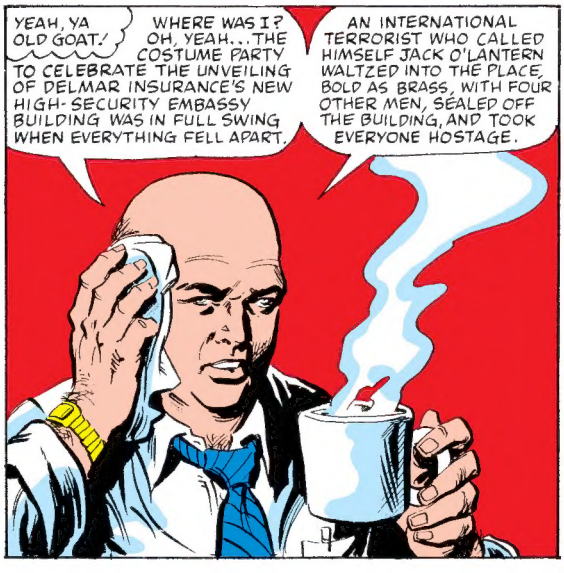
...AND I CAN GET A PAY VOUCHER IN FOR MY PIX IN TIME TO GET PAID BY THE WEEKEND!
OF COURSE, IF JOE ROBERTSON OR JONAH JAMESON IS STILL AT THE OFFICE...


I COULD GET PAID ON THE SPOT! BUT ...NAW, I COULD NEVER BE THAT LUCKY!
COULD I?
TWANG

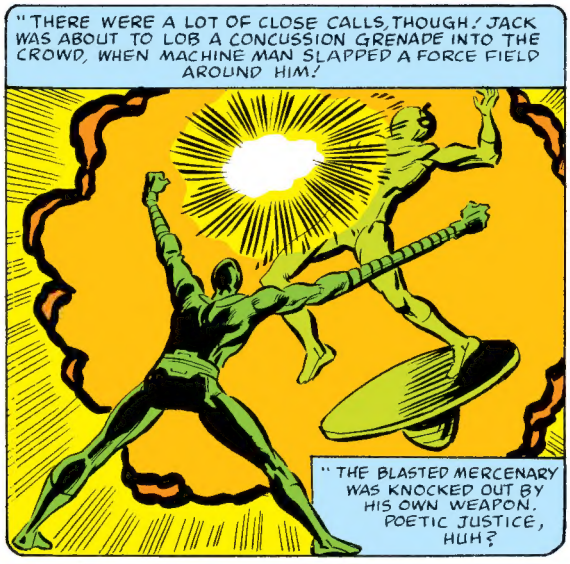
OBOY! THE CITY ROOM'S LIT UP LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE. MAYBE I WILL WALK AWAY WITH MONEY IN POCKET!
DAILY BUGLE
I KNEW THAT CLEAN LIVING AND WHEATIES WOULD PAY OFF FOR ME SOONER OR LATER!


SOON, ON THE BUGLE ROOFTOP...
I'M GLAD I DECIDED TO BRING ALONG MY STREET CLOTHES IN A WEB-PACK THIS EVENING. IT WOULD BE HIGHLY EMBARASSING IF PETER PARKER WALTZED INTO THE CITY ROOM IN A SPIDER-MAN SUIT!
HEH! BUT IT WOULD ALMOST BE WORTH IT... JUST TO SEE JONAH TURN PURPLE, WHEN HE FOUND OUT THAT ONE OF HIS PHOTOGS WAS HIS LEAST FAVORITE COSTUMED CUT-UP!


AND, AT THAT MOMENT IN THE AFOREMENTIONED CITY ROOM...
HERE, ED, THIS SHOULD CALM YOUR NERVES-- COFFEE DOUBLE-BLACK, JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT!
THANKS, SHIRLEY. I NEED SOMETHING!
DON'T WORRY, MR. JAMESON, WE'LL MAKE IT! I'VE ALREADY TAKEN DOWN MOST OF ED'S STORY.
BLAST IT, HAGGERTY! I'M NOT PAYING YOU TO SIT THERE AND DRINK COFFEE! THE EMBASSY BREAK-IN IS NEWS! WE CAN'T HOLD THOSE PRESSES FOREVER YOU KNOW!


YEAH, YA OLD GOAT!
WHERE WAS I? OH, YEAH... THE COSTUME PARTY TO CELEBRATE THE UNVEILING OF DELMAR INSURANCE'S NEW HIGH-SECURITY EMBASSY BUILDING WAS IN FULL SWING WHEN EVERYTHING FELL APART.
AN INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST WHO CALLED HIMSELF JACK O'LANTERN WALTZED INTO THE PLACE, BOLD AS BRASS, WITH FOUR OTHER MEN, SEALED OFF THE BUILDING, AND TOOK EVERYONE HOSTAGE.

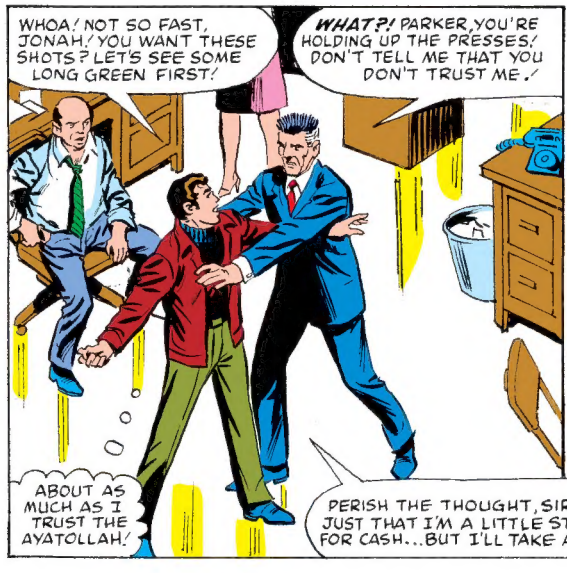
FROM WHAT THE COPS PIECED TOGETHER, HE INTENDED TO HOLD ALL THE VARIOUS DIGNITARIES FOR RANSOM.
AND HE WOULD HAVE SUCCEEDED, IF MACHINE MAN HADN'T SHOWN UP.
*MACHINE MAN #19 -- DENNY.

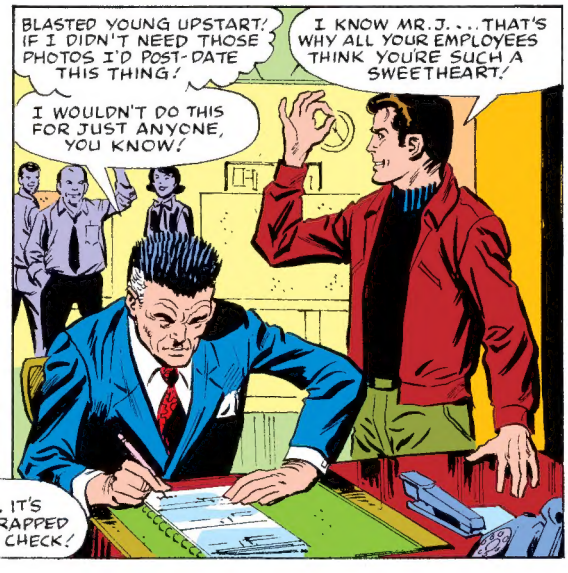

"THERE WERE A LOT OF CLOSE CALLS, THOUGH! JACK WAS ABOUT TO LOB A CONCUSSION GRENADE INTO THE CROWD, WHEN MACHINE MAN SLAPPED A FORCE FIELD AROUND HIM!
"THE BLASTED MERCENARY WAS KNOCKED OUT BY HIS OWN WEAPON. POETIC JUSTICE, HUH?

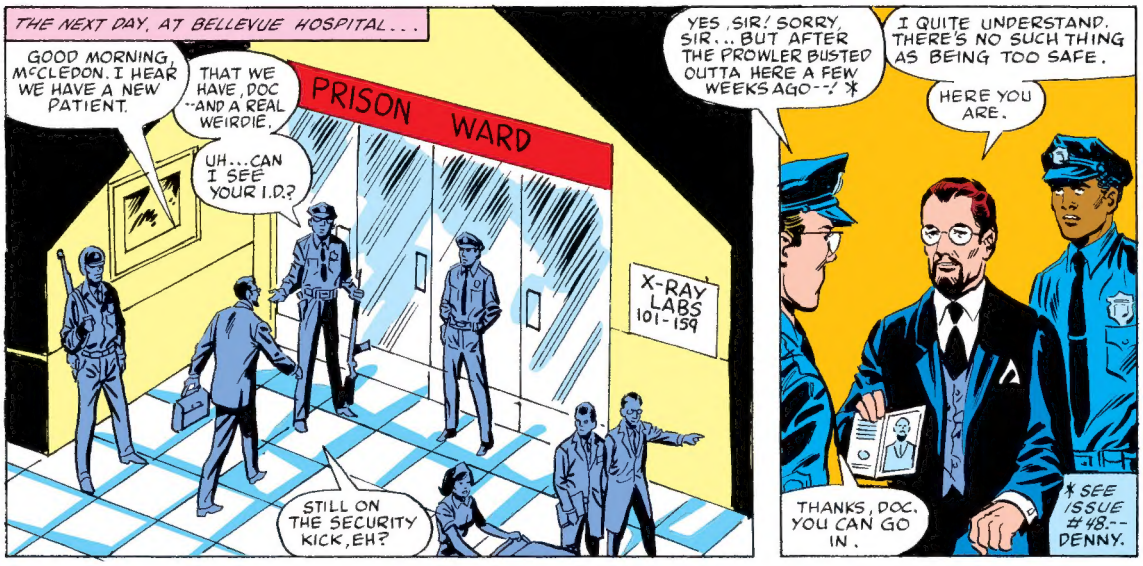
GADFRY! THIS COULD BE THE STORY OF THE MONTH, AND YOU DIDN'T GET A SINGLE PHOTO TO GO WITH IT!
AW, GIMME A BREAK, MR. JAMESON! THE WHOLE PLACE WAS IN A PANIC... PEOPLE WERE RUNNING AROUND, SCARED OUT OF THEIR WITS!
IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL ANY BETTER NOBODY GOT ANY PIX OF JACK O'LANTERN!

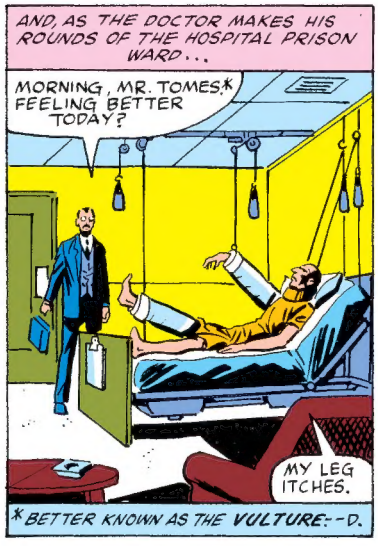
OH, I WOULDN'T SAY THAT!
PARKER?!
IN THE FLESH, J.J.! I MIGHT HAVE MISSED THE BIG FIGHT--
CITY ROOM
--BUT I DID HAPPEN TO GET SOME SHOTS OF NEW YORK'S FINEST RUSHING MR. O'LANTERN INTO BELLEVUE!

PETER, MY BOY! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D COME THROUGH FOR US... UH, WERE THERE ANY OTHER PAPERS ON THE SCENE?
YOU HEAR THAT, HAGGERTY? PARKER'S GOTTEN US EXCLUSIVE PIX!
NOT A ONE, JONAH! EVEN MY BEING THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT!
LET'S HAVE THE FILM, LAD!


WHOA! NOT SO FAST, JONAH! YOU WANT THESE SHOTS? LET'S SEE SOME LONG GREEN FIRST!
WHAT?! PARKER, YOU'RE HOLDING UP THE PRESSES! DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU DON'T TRUST ME!
ABOUT AS MUCH AS I TRUST THE AYATOLLAH!
PERISH THE THOUGHT, SIR. IT'S JUST THAT I'M A LITTLE STRAPPED FOR CASH... BUT I'LL TAKE A CHECK!

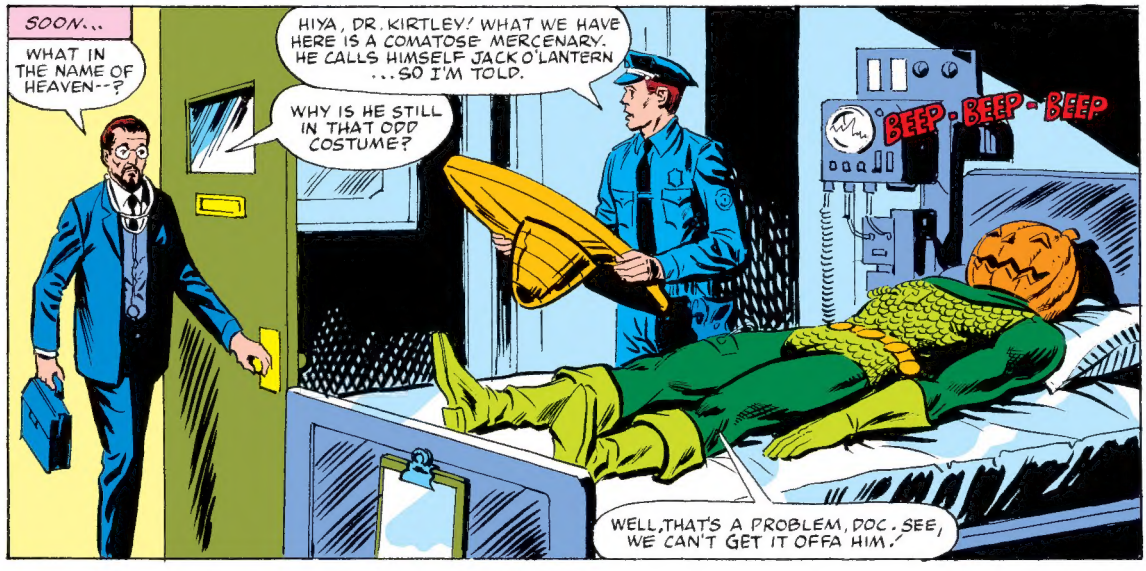

BLASTED YOUNG UPSTART! IF I DIDN'T NEED THOSE PHOTOS I'D POST-DATE THIS THING!
I KNOW MR. J. . . . THAT'S WHY ALL YOUR EMPLOYEES THINK YOU'RE SUCH A SWEETHEART!
I WOULDN'T DO THIS FOR JUST ANYONE, YOU KNOW!

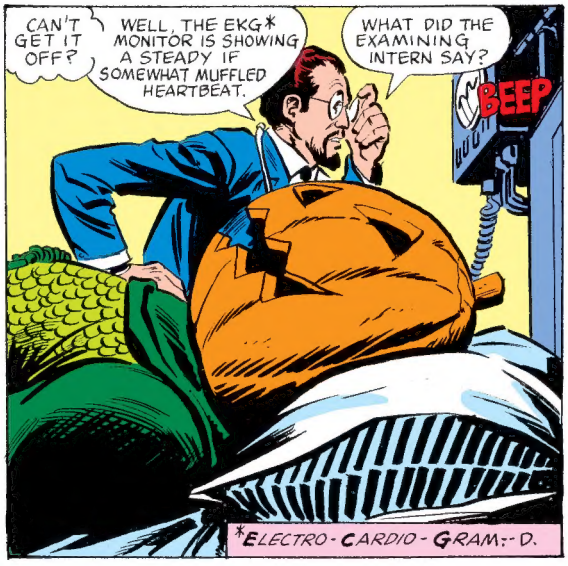

THE NEXT DAY, AT BELLEVUE HOSPITAL...
GOOD MORNING, McCLEDON. I HEAR WE HAVE A NEW PATIENT.
THAT WE HAVE, DOC --AND A REAL WEIRDIE.
UH...CAN I SEE YOUR I.D.?
PRISON WARD
X-RAY LABS 101-159
STILL ON THE SECURITY KICK, EH?
YES, SIR! SORRY, SIR... BUT AFTER THE PROWLER BUSTED OUTTA HERE A FEW WEEKS AGO--! *
I QUITE UNDERSTAND. THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS BEING TOO SAFE.
HERE YOU ARE.
THANKS, DOC. YOU CAN GO IN.
* SEE ISSUE #48.-- DENNY.

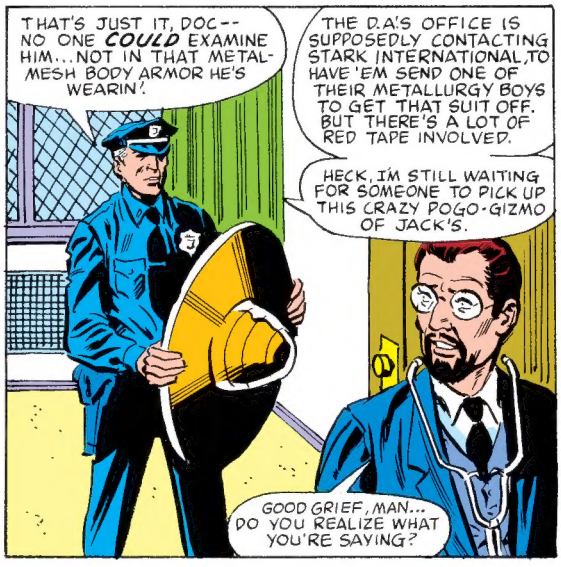

AND, AS THE DOCTOR MAKES HIS ROUNDS OF THE HOSPITAL PRISON WARD...
MORNING, MR. TOMES.* FEELING BETTER TODAY?
MY LEG ITCHES.
* BETTER KNOWN AS THE VULTURE:--D.

AH! THAT'S A GOOD SIGN. WE SHOULD HAVE YOU OUT OF TRACTION IN A MATTER OF WEEKS. YOU'RE HEALING SURPRISINGLY WELL FOR A MAN OF YOUR AGE.
BAH!

AND HOW ARE WE TODAY, MR. HUNTER?
NO SMOKING OXYGEN IN USE
NOT... HUNTER NITRO! NIT...OHH!
STILL NAUSEOUS, EH?* I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO INCREASE YOUR MEDICATION.
*FOR THE REASON WHY, SEE LAST ISSUE:--D.


SOON...
WHAT IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN--?
HIYA, DR. KIRTLEY! WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A COMATOSE MERCENARY. HE CALLS HIMSELF JACK O'LANTERN ...SO I'M TOLD.
WHY IS HE STILL IN THAT ODD COSTUME?
BEEP - BEEP - BEEP
WELL, THAT'S A PROBLEM, DOC. SEE, WE CAN'T GET IT OFFA HIM!

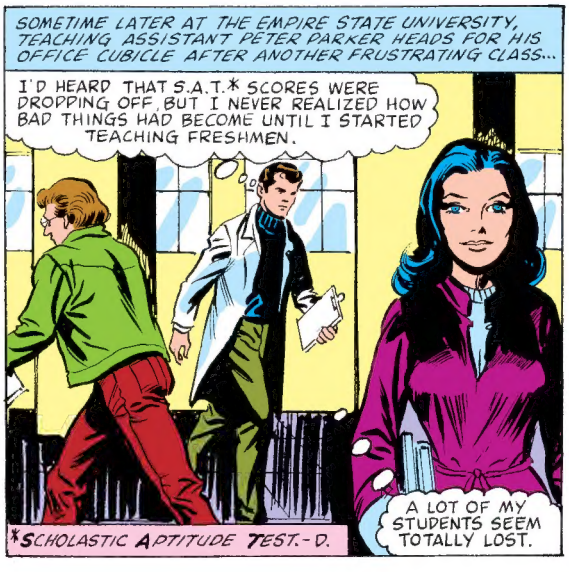

CAN'T GET IT OFF?
WELL, THE EKG* MONITOR IS SHOWING A STEADY IF SOMEWHAT MUFFLED HEARTBEAT.
WHAT DID THE EXAMINING INTERN SAY?
BEEP
*ELECTRO-CARDIO-GRAM:-D.


THAT'S JUST IT, DOC-- NO ONE COULD EXAMINE HIM...NOT IN THAT METAL-MESH BODY ARMOR HE'S WEARIN'!
THE D.A.'S OFFICE IS SUPPOSEDLY CONTACTING STARK INTERNATIONAL, TO HAVE 'EM SEND ONE OF THEIR METALLURGY BOYS TO GET THAT SUIT OFF. BUT THERE'S A LOT OF RED TAPE INVOLVED.
HECK, I'M STILL WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO PICK UP THIS CRAZY POGO-GIZMO OF JACK'S.
GOOD GRIEF, MAN... DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

YES, SIR. IT COULD BE LATE AFTERNOON BEFORE WE GET HIM OUT OF THOSE CRAZY LONGJOHNS.
THEN I CAN'T ADMINISTER EVEN THE SLIGHTEST FIRST-AID! BY THE TIME THE D.A.'S OFFICE GETS ITS ACT TOGETHER--
--THIS MAN COULD DIE!

AT THAT MOMENT, ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HUGE MEDICAL COMPLEX...
ARNIE? YEAH, THEY'VE GOT THE BOSS INSIDE.
NO, THEY TOOK THE OTHER GUYS TO THE LOCK-UP.

LISTEN, I FIGURE WE'VE GOT LESS THAN THREE HOURS TO BUST HIM OUT.
WE'LL USE THE PHONY WORKMAN SCAM. HAVE LOUIE SLAP TOGETHER A FALSE I.D. FOR ME ...FAST!


SOMETIME LATER AT THE EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY, TEACHING ASSISTANT PETER PARKER HEADS FOR HIS OFFICE CUBICLE AFTER ANOTHER FRUSTRATING CLASS...
I'D HEARD THAT S.A.T.* SCORES WERE DROPPING OFF, BUT I NEVER REALIZED HOW BAD THINGS HAD BECOME UNTIL I STARTED TEACHING FRESHMEN.
A LOT OF MY STUDENTS SEEM TOTALLY LOST.
*SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST.-D.

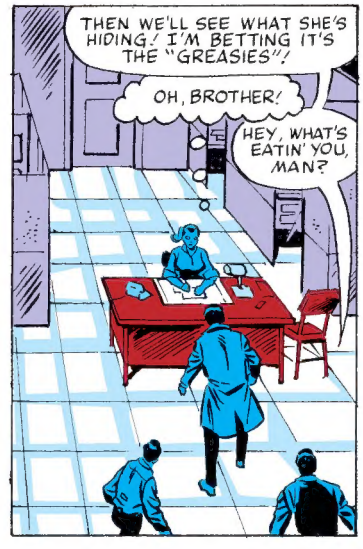
AND THE TRAGEDY IS THAT MOST OF THEM ARE PRETTY BRIGHT. SOMEHOW THEY'VE GOTTEN TO COLLEGE WITHOUT HAVING PICKED UP THE MOST BASIC READING SKILLS.
I'M APPALLED. HOW CAN... WAIT-A-MINUTE!
THE DOOR TO THE DEPARTMENT OFFICES IS AJAR-- AND MY SPIDER-SENSE IS BUZZING A WARNING! SOMEONE IN THERE IS LYING IN WAIT FOR ME!
WELL, WHOEVER IT IS...

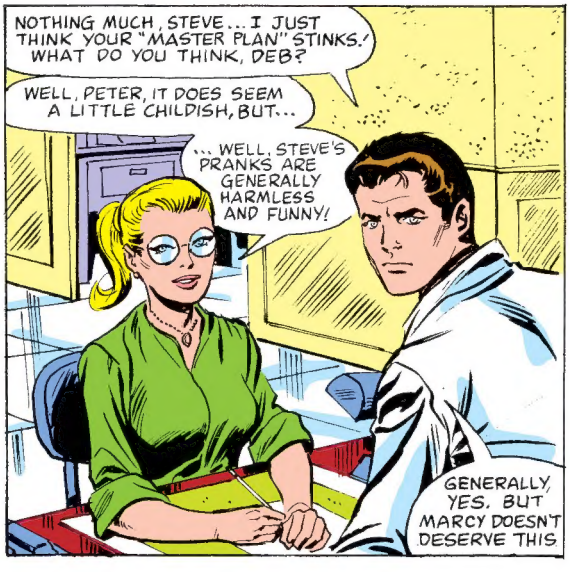
...THEY'RE IN FOR A BIG SURPRISE!
WHAT THE HEY?!
SHEE-OOT! I THOUGHT I HAD YOU FOR SURE, PETE!

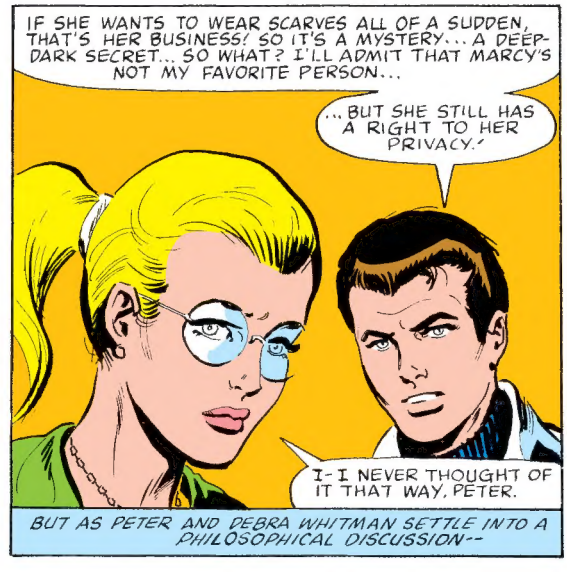
FACE IT, STEVE -- YOU'RE A WASH-OUT WHEN IT COMES TO IMPRESSIONS OF SPIDER-MAN!
THAT WAS SOME DIVE, PETE? WHAT HAPPENED... YOU TRIP OR SOMETHING?
UH...YEAH, PHIL. I TRIPPED.
WHAT THE BLAZES IS HOPKINS DOING UP THERE?

YOU'D BETTER LET HIM EXPLAIN, PETE.
THAT'S RIGHT, CHANG... YOU COULDN'T DO MY SCHEME, JUSTICE ANYHOW!

YA SEE, PETE, THIS IS MY MASTERPLAN TO UNCOVER THE "MARCY KANE MINUTE MYSTERY"! YOU KNOW HOW SHE'S BEEN WEARING DIFFERENT SCARVES AND SUCH?
WELL, WHEN MARCY COMES BACK FROM HER 12:30 CLASS, HER SCARF OF THE DAY IS GONNA BE YANKED HEAVENWARD BY YOURS TRULY!


THEN WE'LL SEE WHAT SHE'S HIDING! I'M BETTING IT'S THE "GREASIES"!
OH, BROTHER!
HEY, WHAT'S EATIN' YOU, MAN?

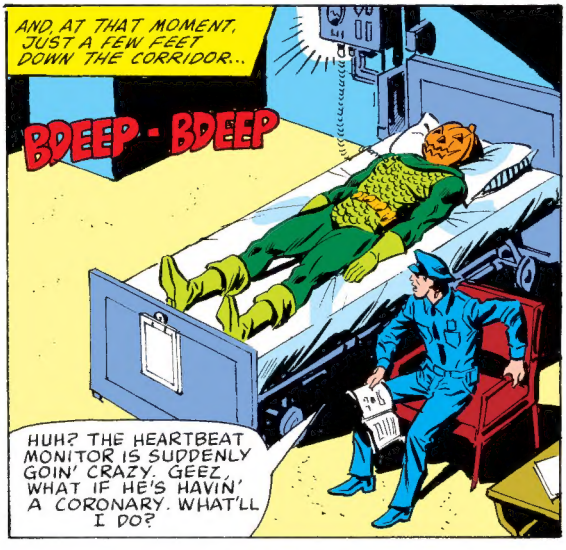

NOTHING MUCH, STEVE... I JUST THINK YOUR "MASTER PLAN" STINKS! WHAT DO YOU THINK, DEB?
WELL, PETER, IT DOES SEEM A LITTLE CHILDISH, BUT...
...WELL, STEVE'S PRANKS ARE GENERALLY HARMLESS AND FUNNY!
GENERALLY, YES, BUT MARCY DOESN'T DESERVE THIS

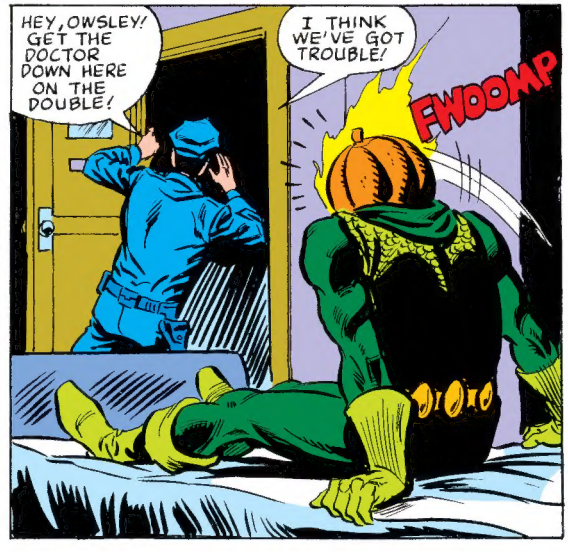

IF SHE WANTS TO WEAR SCARVES ALL OF A SUDDEN, THAT'S HER BUSINESS! SO IT'S A MYSTERY... A DEEP-DARK SECRET... SO WHAT? I'LL ADMIT THAT MARCY'S NOT MY FAVORITE PERSON...
...BUT SHE STILL HAS A RIGHT TO HER PRIVACY!
I-I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT THAT WAY, PETER.
BUT AS PETER AND DEBRA WHITMAN SETTLE INTO A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION--

--MEANWHILE, AT BELLEVUE...
PULL OVER, MIKE. I'LL GET OUT HERE.

OKAY, SHORTY. IS EVERYTHING SET?
YEP. I'LL USE MY FAKE NEW YORK BELL I.D. TO GET INTO THE PRISON WARD...
...AND ONCE THERE, I'LL LET THE OTHERS IN THROUGH THE UTILITIES DUCTS. YOU BE READY AND WAITING.
CHECK.

SOON...
HI, I'M FROM THE PHONE COMPANY. WE GOT A CALL OF TROUBLE ON THE MONITOR LINES.
THE DISPATCHER SAID I SHOW YOU THIS PASS.
LOOKS OKAY. GO ON IN.
THANKS.
TURKEY.


AND, AT THAT MOMENT, JUST A FEW FEET DOWN THE CORRIDOR...
BDEEP - BDEEP
HUH? THE HEARTBEAT MONITOR IS SUDDENLY GOIN' CRAZY. GEEZ, WHAT IF HE'S HAVIN' A CORONARY. WHAT'LL I DO?


HEY, OWSLEY! GET THE DOCTOR DOWN HERE ON THE DOUBLE!
I THINK WE'VE GOT TROUBLE!
FWOOMP

YOU...HAVE MORE THAN JUST "TROUBLE," FOOL...
HUH?!
OH... NO.

KABLAM
HOLEE--!

CRIMENY! THAT BLAST CAME FROM JACK O'LANTERN'S ROOM!
BRING UP THAT RIOT GEAR....THIS COULD BE A BREAK!
1205
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, BUT IT CAN ONLY HELP!

SORRY, PALLY, BUT NOBODY'S USIN' RIOT GEAR ON THE BOSS!
SMAK
KRAK
PILE ON 'EM! DON'T GIVE 'EM A CHANCE TO FIGHT BACK!

THAT WAS A CINCH! WE WON'T HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLE FROM THESE PIGS!
BOSS! YOU'RE OKAY? W-WE HEARD YOU WERE IN A COMA!
I WAS! IT WAS ALL PART OF MY RESERVE ESCAPE PLAN!
MY BODY ARMOR SAVED ME FROM THE EXPLOSION OF MY CONCUSSION GRENADE I WAS ONLY STUNNED.
STILL MACHINE MAN'S TRICKS LEFT ME DISORIENTED ENOUGH THAT IT WAS CLEAR I WOULD BE APPREHENDED WITH THE OTHERS.

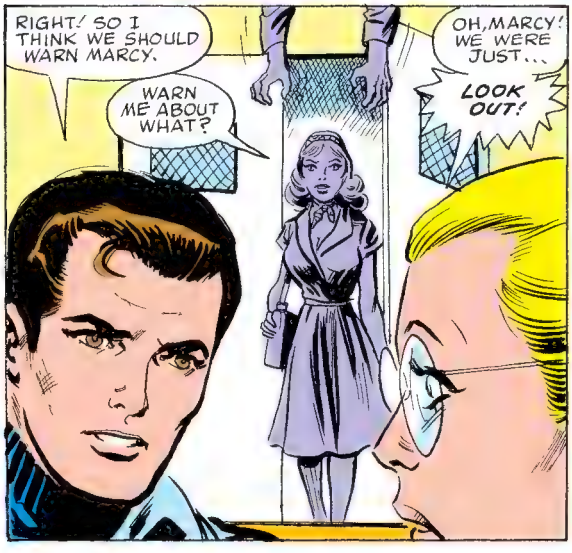
FORTUNATELY, I HAD AN ACE IN THE HOLE...A HOLLOW TOOTH IN THE BACK OF MY MOUTH WHICH HELD A COMA-INDUCING DRUG.
AS THE POLICE CLOSED IN, I TOOK THE DRUG... KNOWING I WOULD BE BROUGHT TO A PLACE LIKE THIS. IT IS FAR EASIER TO ESCAPE FROM A HOSPITAL THAN A PRISON!

WELL, WE GOT A LIMO WAITIN' FOR US OUT ON FIRST AVENUE, BOSS! WE CAN BE OUTTA HERE IN SECONDS!
NO... THIS IS TOO GOOD AN OPPORTUNITY TO PASS UP.
WHADDAYA MEAN?
WITH ALL OF YOU HERE, I CAN MAKE UP FOR LAST NIGHT'S FIASCO--BY HOLDING BELLEVUE HOSTAGE!

MEANWHILE, BACK AT E.S.U....
I GUESS I AM A LITTLE INTENSE ABOUT THIS, DEB. BUT, DOGGONE IT, PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO THEIR SECRETS!
BUT...DON'T YOU THINK THAT TRUST IS MORE IMPORTANT?

OH, SURE, BUT YOU CAN'T GO AROUND WITH YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE ALL THE TIME. EVERYONE HAS SOMETHING THEY WANT TO KEEP SECRET...I KNOW I DO!
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL, IF SOMEONE CAME UP TO YOU AND SAID, "I KNOW EVERYTHING!"
I... WELL... THAT...IS...

GREAT MOVE, PARKER. YOU FINALLY HAVE THE LADY TALKING TO YOU AGAIN, AND YOU UPSET HER!
HEY, RELAX, DEB.
DO YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN?
Y-YES NO ONE WANTS TO FEEL VULNERABLE.


RIGHT! SO I THINK WE SHOULD WARN MARCY.
WARN ME ABOUT WHAT?
OH, MARCY! WE WERE JUST...
LOOK OUT!

TOO LATE!
THIS LADY HAS JUST BEEN...
DEWIGGED?

WHAT? MARCY YOU... YOU'RE A BRUNETTE!
YES... YES, I'M NOT A REAL BLOND. ARE YOU SATISFIED?
HEY. MARCY... I'M... SORRY. HERE, YOU... WANT THIS BACK?
ARE YOU VERY SURE YOU CAN'T HUMILIATE ME SOME MORE?

WHAT'S THE POINT? YOU ALL KNOW... EVERYONE WILL KNOW!
YOU CAN KEEP IT, HOPKINS! IT'S ANOTHER TROPHY TO COMMEMORATE YOUR LIFE OF J-J-J-JOKES!
THE POOR KID... I THOUGHT SHE ALWAYS SEEMED A LITTLE UP-TIGHT ABOUT HER APPEARANCE, BUT I HAD NO IDEA!
MARCY! WAIT...DON'T GO!

BUT THE YOUNG WOMAN PAYS NO HEED TO PETER'S WORDS. SHE BOLTS AND RUNS TO THE NEAREST EXIT...
EXIT
MARCY!

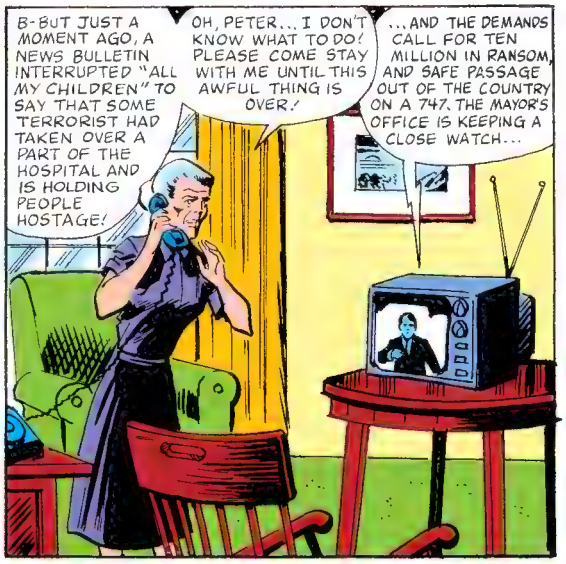
TAKE IT EASY, LADY. THAT'S IT ...CATCH YOUR BREATH. NOW... YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?
IF YOU DO, I'M HERE TO LISTEN. IF NOT... WELL, I'M HERE ANYWAY.
M-MY HAIR WAS VERY LIGHT WHEN I WAS A GIRL.
D-DADDY USED TO SAY IT WAS LIKE SPUN GOLD.

IT WAS MY BEST FEATURE... MY ONLY GOOD FEATURE. B-BUT AS I GOT OLDER, IT TURNED DARKER. SO, I BLEACHED IT, TO STAY BLONDE.
BUT, A FEW WEEKS AGO, MY DOCTOR SAID I'D HAVE TO STOP OR MY HAIR WOULD BE RUINED... I-IT WOULD FALL OUT.

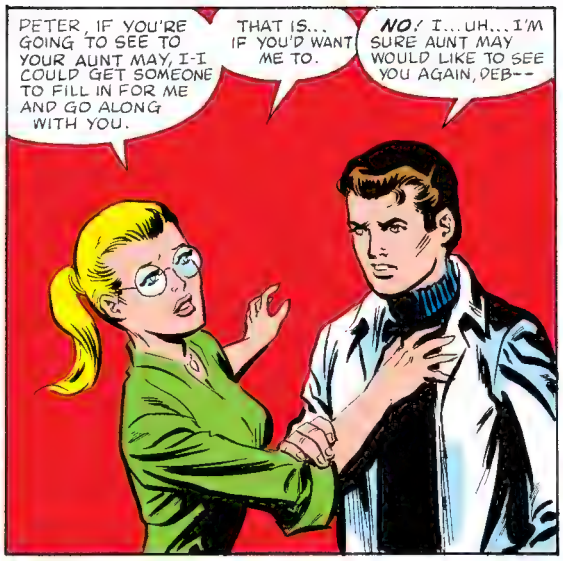
MARCY, YOU DIDN'T NEED SCARVES AND WIGS. YOU'D BE ATTRACTIVE WITH BROWN HAIR, OR RED HAIR... OR GREEN.
THIS IS THE MAN I'VE BEEN GIVING A HARD TIME ALL SEMESTER? THE ONE I THOUGHT WAS A SELF-CENTERED "PRIZE-STUDENT"?
MARCY... WAIT!
PETER?

I TRIED, DEB... I REALLY TRIED TO HELP, BUT I GUESS THIS IS SOMETHING MARCY WILL HAVE TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH. MAYBE WHEN SHE CALMS DOWN, YOU CAN TALK TO HER.
WELL... THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO NEEDS TO TALK TO YOU RIGHT NOW.
YOUR AUNT IS ON THE PHONE, AND SHE SOUNDS HYSTERICAL.

AND SOON INSIDE...
AUNT MAY? WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, PETER! IT'S AWFUL! IT'S JUST AWFUL!
IT'S NATHAN. HE'S IN TERRIBLE DANGER. EVERY WEEK HE GOES TO BELLEVUE FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY.
IT'S FOR HIS LEGS, YOU KNOW.


B-BUT JUST A MOMENT AGO, A NEWS BULLETIN INTERRUPTED "ALL MY CHILDREN" TO SAY THAT SOME TERRORIST HAD TAKEN OVER A PART OF THE HOSPITAL AND IS HOLDING PEOPLE HOSTAGE!
OH, PETER... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! PLEASE COME STAY WITH ME UNTIL THIS AWFUL THING IS OVER!
...AND THE DEMANDS CALL FOR TEN MILLION IN RANSOM, AND SAFE PASSAGE OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON A 747. THE MAYOR'S OFFICE IS KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH...

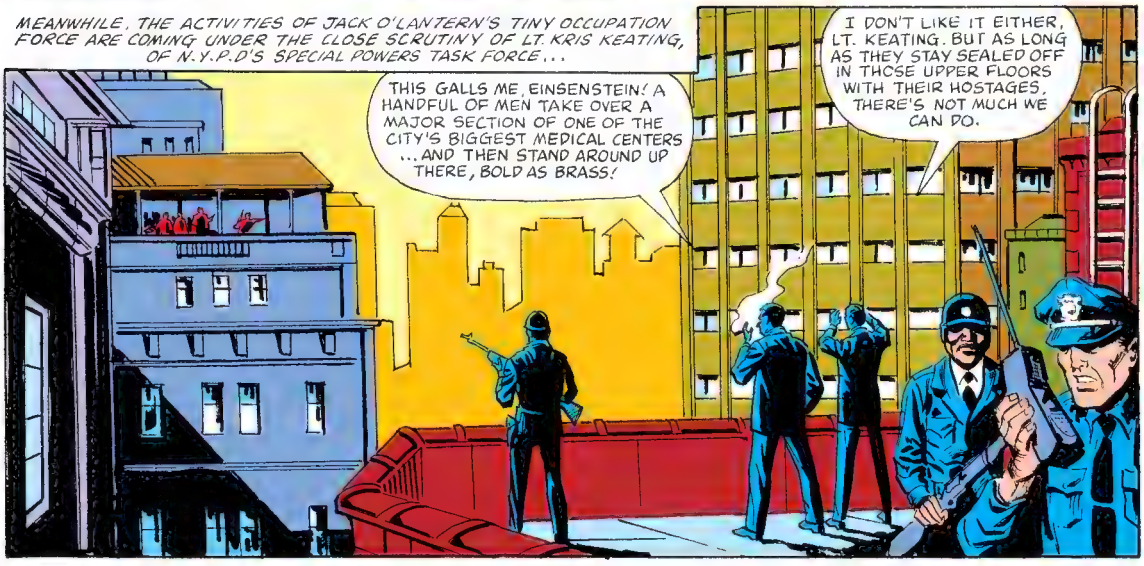
PETER?
NATHAN LUBENSKY MEANS A LOT TO AUNT MAY... MORE THAN ANY MAN SHE'S KNOWN SINCE UNCLE BEN DIED. I CAN'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO THAT CRUSTY OLD GUY.
I CAN'T FAIL HIM THE WAY I FAILED UNCLE BEN.


PETER, IF YOU'RE GOING TO SEE TO YOUR AUNT MAY, I-I COULD GET SOMEONE TO FILL IN FOR ME AND GO ALONG WITH YOU.
THAT IS... IF YOU'D WANT ME TO.
NO! I...UH...I'M SURE AUNT MAY WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, DEB--

--BUT THIS IS REALLY A FAMILY MATTER...SOMETHING I HAVE TO HANDLE MYSELF.
BUT--!
I HATE TO BE SO CURT WITH DEB ...ESPECIALLY NOW THAT SHE'S FINALLY TALKING TO ME AGAIN. BUT I CAN'T VERY WELL TAKE HER WHERE I'M GOING!

OH, PETER. I WANT SO MUCH TO HELP YOU, TO SHARE IN YOUR PROBLEMS. IF ONLY YOU'D CONFIDE IN ME MORE...
...OR IF I COULD FIND THE STRENGTH TO CONFIDE IN YOU!
AND, AS THE SHY YOUNG SECRETARY RETURNS TO HER DESK, THE OBJECT OF HER CONCERN IS ALREADY ON THE ROOFTOP--

--LEAPING INTO THE SKIES.
I DON'T KNOW WHO'S TAKEN OVER BELLEVUE, BUT THEY'LL HAVE TO RECKON WITH SPIDER-MAN!

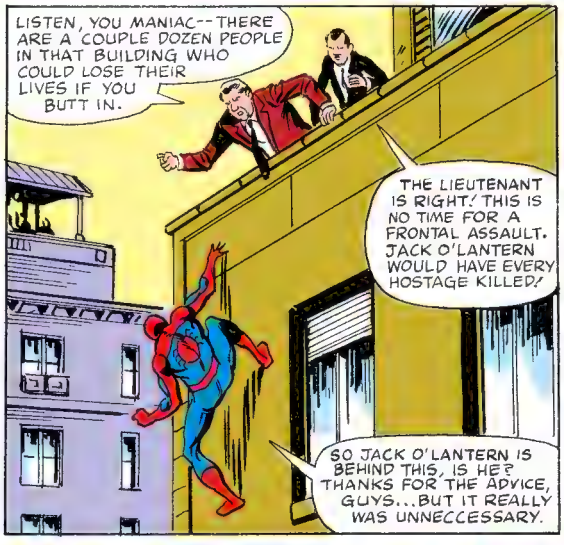

MEANWHILE, THE ACTIVITIES OF JACK O'LANTERN'S TINY OCCUPATION FORCE ARE COMING UNDER THE CLOSE SCRUTINY OF LT. KRIS KEATING, OF N.Y.P.D'S SPECIAL POWERS TASK FORCE...
THIS GALLS ME, EINSENSTEIN! A HANDFUL OF MEN TAKE OVER A MAJOR SECTION OF ONE OF THE CITY'S BIGGEST MEDICAL CENTERS ...AND THEN STAND AROUND UP THERE, BOLD AS BRASS!
I DON'T LIKE IT EITHER, LT. KEATING. BUT AS LONG AS THEY STAY SEALED OFF IN THOSE UPPER FLOORS WITH THEIR HOSTAGES, THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO.

OUR HANDS ARE TIED.
YEAH... I KNOW. IF WE TRY STORMING THE PLACE, THEY'LL KILL THE HOSTAGES! WHY...

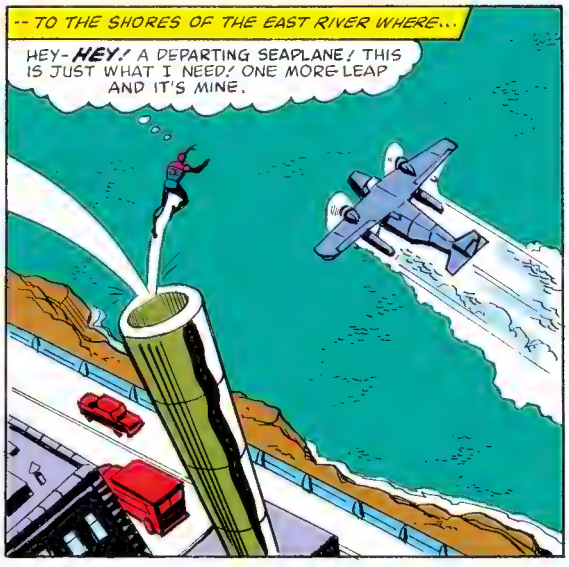
"... WE CAN'T EVEN LAUNCH A GAS ATTACK! THE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE IS SURE THEY HAVE OXYGEN MASKS. GAS WOULD ONLY HURT THE HOSTAGES. NO, ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT.

AND I TELL YA RIGHT NOW, WAITING DRIVES ME CRAZY. IF ONLY SOMETHING WOULD HAPPEN THAT--
OH, NO! NOT HIM! NOT NOW!

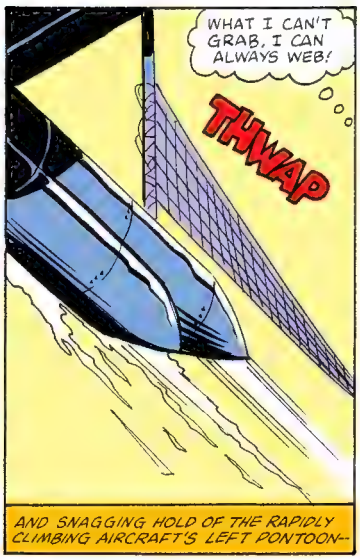
SPIDER-MAN, YOU IDIOT! GET OUTTA HERE! YOU'LL RUIN EVERYTHING!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, KEATING? AFRAID I'LL SHOW YOU UP... AGAIN?

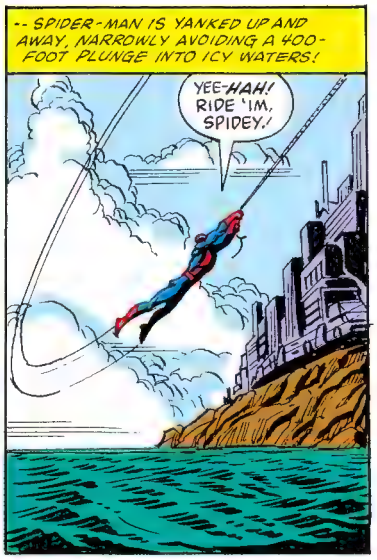

LISTEN, YOU MANIAC--THERE ARE A COUPLE DOZEN PEOPLE IN THAT BUILDING WHO COULD LOSE THEIR LIVES IF YOU BUTT IN.
THE LIEUTENANT IS RIGHT! THIS IS NO TIME FOR A FRONTAL ASSAULT. JACK O'LANTERN WOULD HAVE EVERY HOSTAGE KILLED!
SO JACK O'LANTERN IS BEHIND THIS, IS HE? THANKS FOR THE ADVICE, GUYS...BUT IT REALLY WAS UNNECCESSARY.

I NEVER USE A FRONTAL APPROACH...NOT WHEN A SNEAKY ONE IS SO MUCH MORE SENSIBLE.
SHOOTING A SINGLE STRAND OF HIS INCREDIBLY STRONG WEBBING AT THE ADJACENT BUILDING, SPIDER-MAN SWINGS OUT AND AWAY FROM THE CAPTIVE MEDICAL COMPLEX, CIRCLING FAR TO THE SOUTH AND EAST--


--TO THE SHORES OF THE EAST RIVER WHERE...
HEY-HEY! A DEPARTING SEAPLANE! THIS IS JUST WHAT I NEED! ONE MORE LEAP AND IT'S MINE.

BUT...
NUTS! IT PUT ON AN EXTRA BURST OF SPEED AT JUST THE WRONG INSTANT! NOT THAT IT MATTERS, THOUGH!

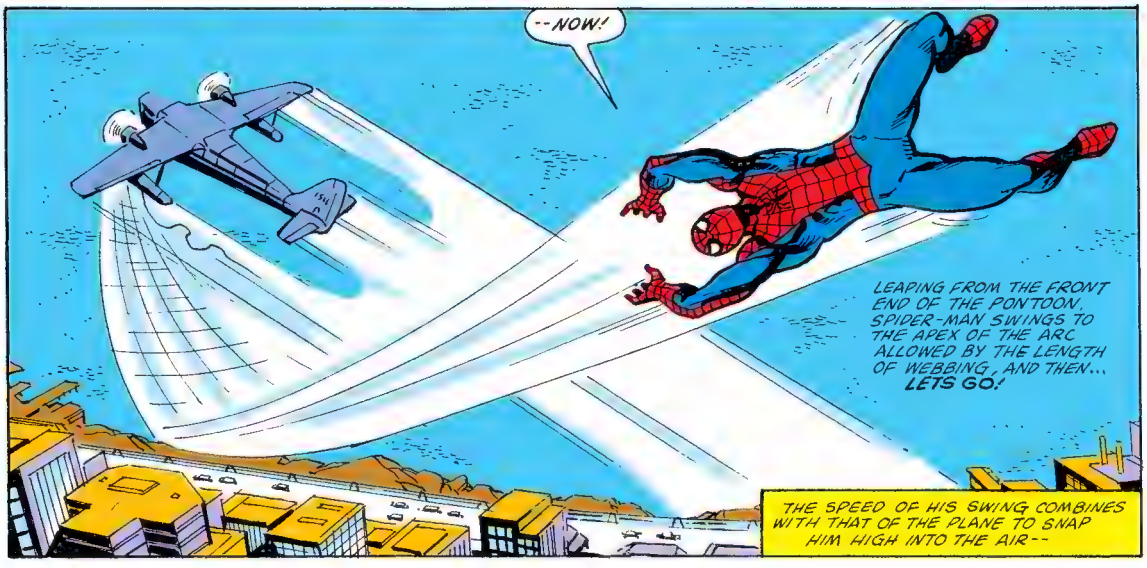

WHAT I CAN'T GRAB, I CAN ALWAYS WEB!
THWAP
AND SNAGGING HOLD OF THE RAPIDLY CLIMBING AIRCRAFT'S LEFT PONTOON--


-- SPIDER-MAN IS YANKED UP AND AWAY, NARROWLY AVOIDING A 400-FOOT PLUNGE INTO ICY WATERS!
YEE-HAH! RIDE 'IM, SPIDEY!

THIS WOULD BE FUN IF I WEREN'T IN SUCH A HURRY... BUT I HAVE TO GET INTO THAT HOSPITAL BEFORE SOMEBODY GETS HURT.
AND TO DO THAT, I'D BETTER HUSTLE UP THAT PLANE BEFORE IT GETS TOO FAR FROM BELLEVUE!
SKITTERING UP THE WEB-LINE LIKE HIS EIGHT-LEGGED NAMESAKE--

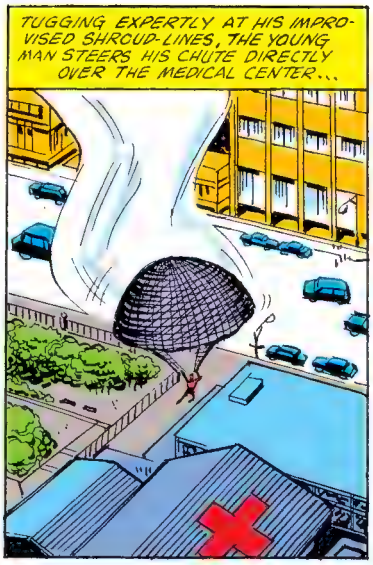
-- SPIDER-MAN SWIFTLY REACHES THE PONTOON.
MADE IT! WITH THE AIR SPEED THIS BABY'S MAKING, I'LL PULL OFF MY SNEAK ATTACK YET!

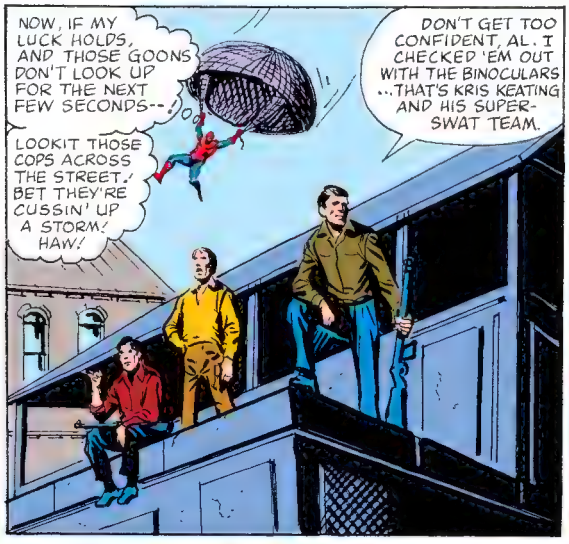
I HAVE TO WORK FAST... I'LL ONLY GET ONE CHANCE TO MAKE THIS WORK AND I HAVE TO TAKE IT!


--NOW!
LEAPING FROM THE FRONT END OF THE PONTOON, SPIDER-MAN SWINGS TO THE APEX OF THE ARC ALLOWED BY THE LENGTH OF WEBBING, AND THEN... LETS GO!
THE SPEED OF HIS SWING COMBINES WITH THAT OF THE PLANE TO SNAP HIM HIGH INTO THE AIR--

... HUNDREDS OF FEET HIGH!
I HAVEN'T MADE A WEB-CHUTE IN AGES. HOPE I REMEMBER HOW... OTHERWISE I'LL MAKE A NASTY RED BLOTCH WHEN I LAND!

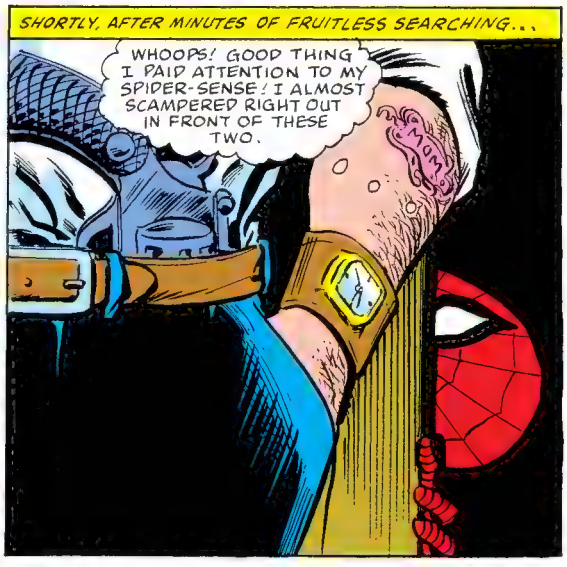
AH, PERFECT! IT'S JUST LIKE RIDING A BICYCLE, I GUESS...
... ONCE YOU LEARN, YOU NEVER FORGET! WELL, BOMBS AWAY!


TUGGING EXPERTLY AT HIS IMPROVISED SHROUD-LINES, THE YOUNG MAN STEERS HIS CHUTE DIRECTLY OVER THE MEDICAL CENTER...


NOW, IF MY LUCK HOLDS, AND THOSE GOONS DON'T LOOK UP FOR THE NEXT FEW SECONDS--!
LOOKIT THOSE COPS ACROSS THE STREET! BET THEY'RE CUSSIN' UP A STORM! HAW!
DON'T GET TOO CONFIDENT, AL. I CHECKED 'EM OUT WITH THE BINOCULARS ...THAT'S KRIS KEATING AND HIS SUPER-SWAT TEAM.

KEATING, HUH? HE SENT SOME BUDDIES OF MINE TO ATTICA STATE PRISON NOT SO LONG AGO. I WOULDN'T MIND TRYIN' SOMETHIN'--YA KNOW?
SURE, AL.
NOW, SIT DOWN.
GOOD. KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE BIG, BAD POLICEMEN, BOYS... WHILE I GO INTO MY SILENT SAM ROUTINE.

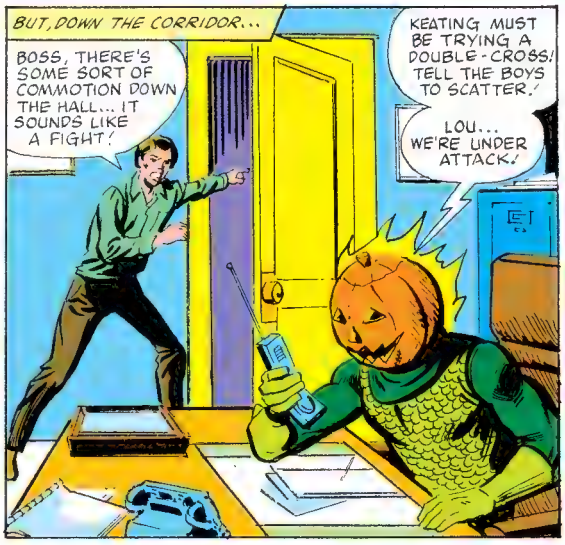
SOON, INSIDE...
SO FAR, SO GOOD.
I'D TAKE OUT THESE GOONS BUT CHANCES ARE THEY HAVE TO REPORT TO THEIR LEADER, PERIODICALLY.
FIRST, I HAVE TO FIND THE HOSTAGES. ONCE THEY'RE SAFE, I CAN CLEAN HOUSE!
-1205

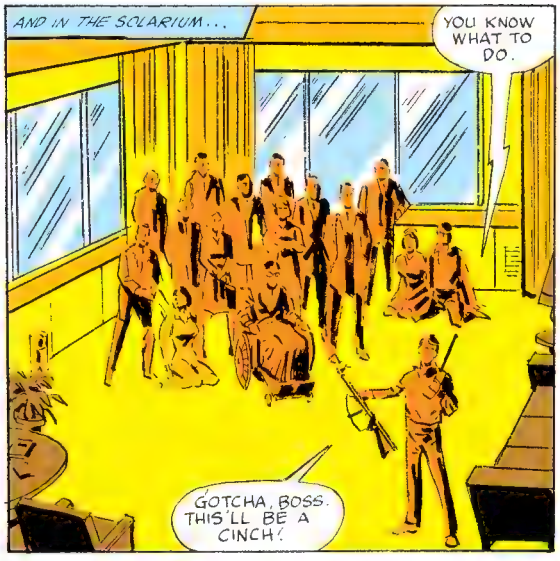

SHORTLY, AFTER MINUTES OF FRUITLESS SEARCHING...
WHOOPS! GOOD THING I PAID ATTENTION TO MY SPIDER-SENSE! I ALMOST SCAMPERED RIGHT OUT IN FRONT OF THESE TWO.

C'MON, IT'S TIME TO REPORT IN.
YA THINK IT'S OKAY TO LEAVE LOU AND THE HOSTAGES?
OH, FINE! THEY'RE TURNING THIS WAY. IF I JUMP FOR THE CEILING THEY'RE BOUND TO HEAR ME... TOO LATE FOR STEALTH NOW. IT'S TIME FOR SPEED!
SOLARIUM PHYSICAL THERAPY
LOOK, THE ONLY WAY THE HOSTAGES CAN GET OUT OF THE SOLARIUM IS TO GO THROUGH LOUIE... AND HE HAS AN M-16!

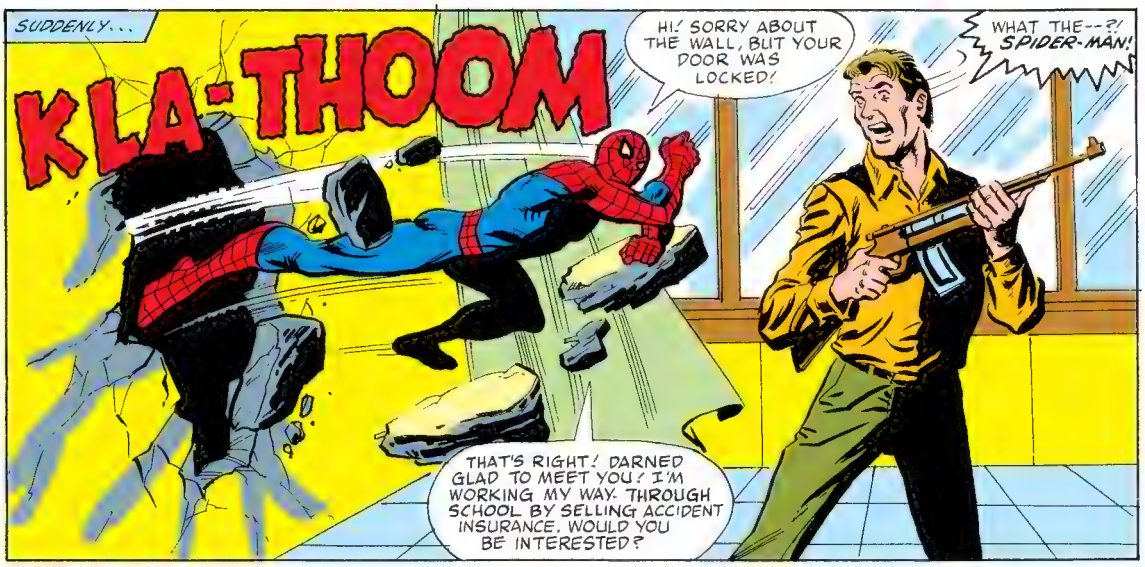
THANKS FOR THE INFO, GENTS. I'D HAVE NEVER GUESSED THE SOLARIUM!
HAHN?
ULP!

WUNK
I MEAN... HOSTAGES IN THE SOLARIUM! THAT'S LIKE "THE BUTLER DID IT"! IT'S SO OBVIOUS, NO ONE WOULD EVER SERIOUSLY CONSIDER IT!
WHUD

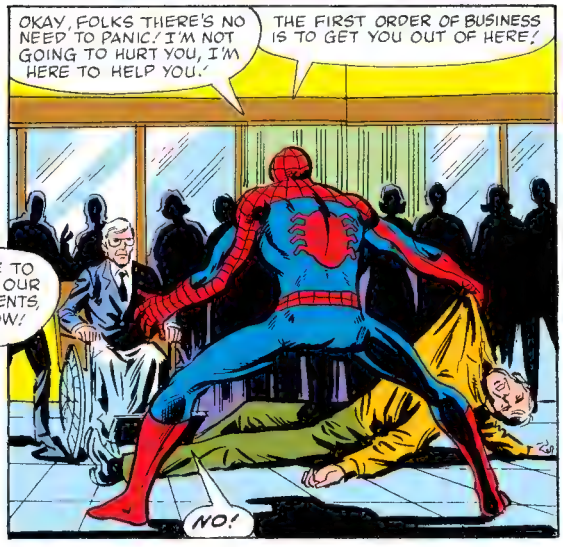

BUT, DOWN THE CORRIDOR...
BOSS, THERE'S SOME SORT OF COMMOTION DOWN THE HALL... IT SOUNDS LIKE A FIGHT!
KEATING MUST BE TRYING A DOUBLE-CROSS! TELL THE BOYS TO SCATTER!
LOU... WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!


AND IN THE SOLARIUM...
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
GOTCHA, BOSS. THIS'LL BE A CINCH!

BAD NEWS, PEOPLE. SOMEBODY DIDN'T TAKE OUR DEMANDS SERIOUSLY. YOU READY TO DIE?
NO! NO, PLEASE!
PTUI! DON'T PLEAD WITH THIS TRASH! THAT'S JUST WHAT HE WANTS!
GO AHEAD AND SHOOT! YOU CAN KILL ME FIRST! BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS... I'LL SEE YOU IN HADES!


SUDDENLY...
KLA-THOOM
HI! SORRY ABOUT THE WALL, BUT YOUR DOOR WAS LOCKED!
WHAT THE--?! SPIDER-MAN!
THAT'S RIGHT! DARNED GLAD TO MEET YOU! I'M WORKING MY WAY THROUGH SCHOOL BY SELLING ACCIDENT INSURANCE. WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED?

WHUD
OH, I'M SORRY AGAIN, BUT OUR POLICIES DON'T COVER MEN WITH GLASS JAWS!
WE HAVE TO PROTECT OUR INVESTMENTS, YOU KNOW!


OKAY, FOLKS THERE'S NO NEED TO PANIC! I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU, I'M HERE TO HELP YOU!
THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE!
NO!

THE FIRST THING YOU HAVE TO DO, YOUNG FELLA, IS TO GO AFTER THAT JACK O' LANTERN.
SIR, IT'S GOING TO BE VERY DANGEROUS AROUND HERE. YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!

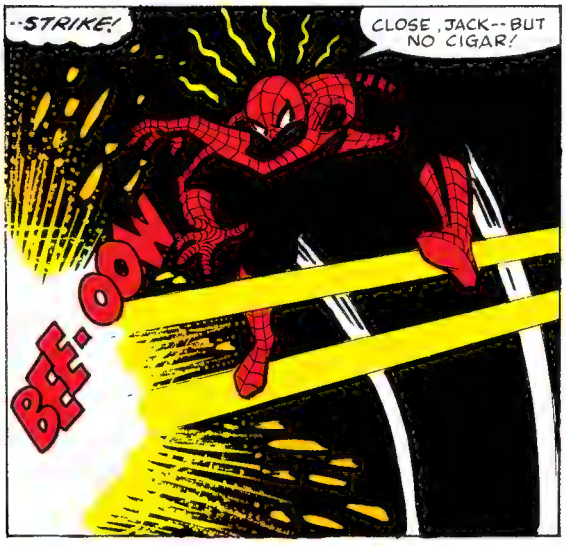
BALDERDASH! YOU WASTE ANY MORE TIME ON US, AND THAT BLASTED TERRORIST WILL GET AWAY! IF YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT PEOPLE, IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO STOP HIM!

AND DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT US! NATHAN R. LUBENSKY CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF! WHY, WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE--!

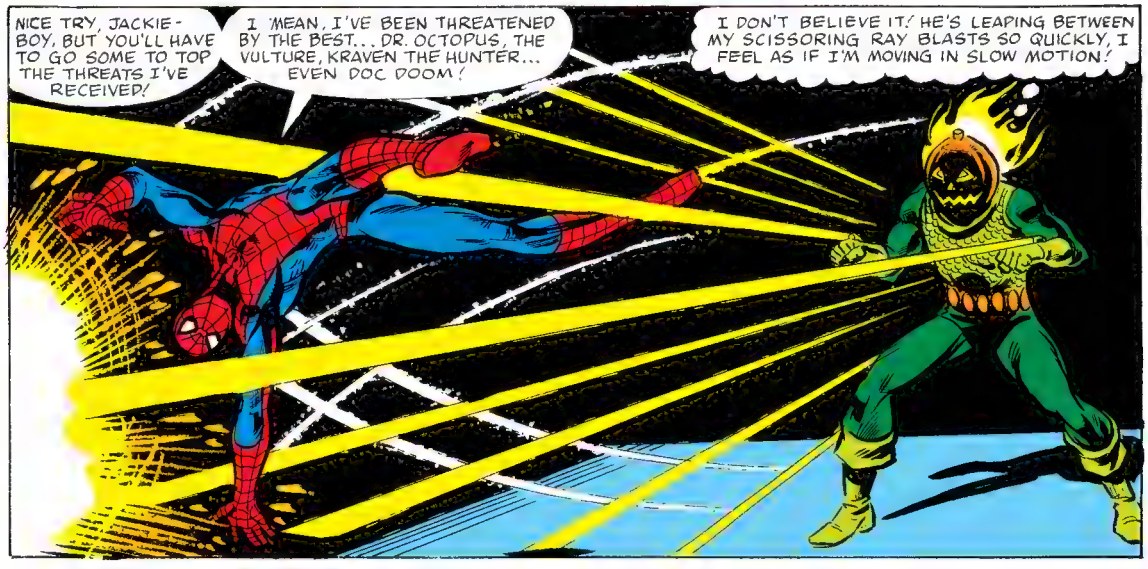
AND SO, MOMENTS LATER...
I'LL SAY THIS FOR AUNT MAY--SHE SURE KNOWS HOW TO PICK 'EM!
I'VE MET FEW MEN WITH AS MUCH GUMPTION AND CONFIDENCE AS NATHAN LUBENSKY!
NOW TO FIND JACK O'LANTERN. HMM... WHERE TO START?

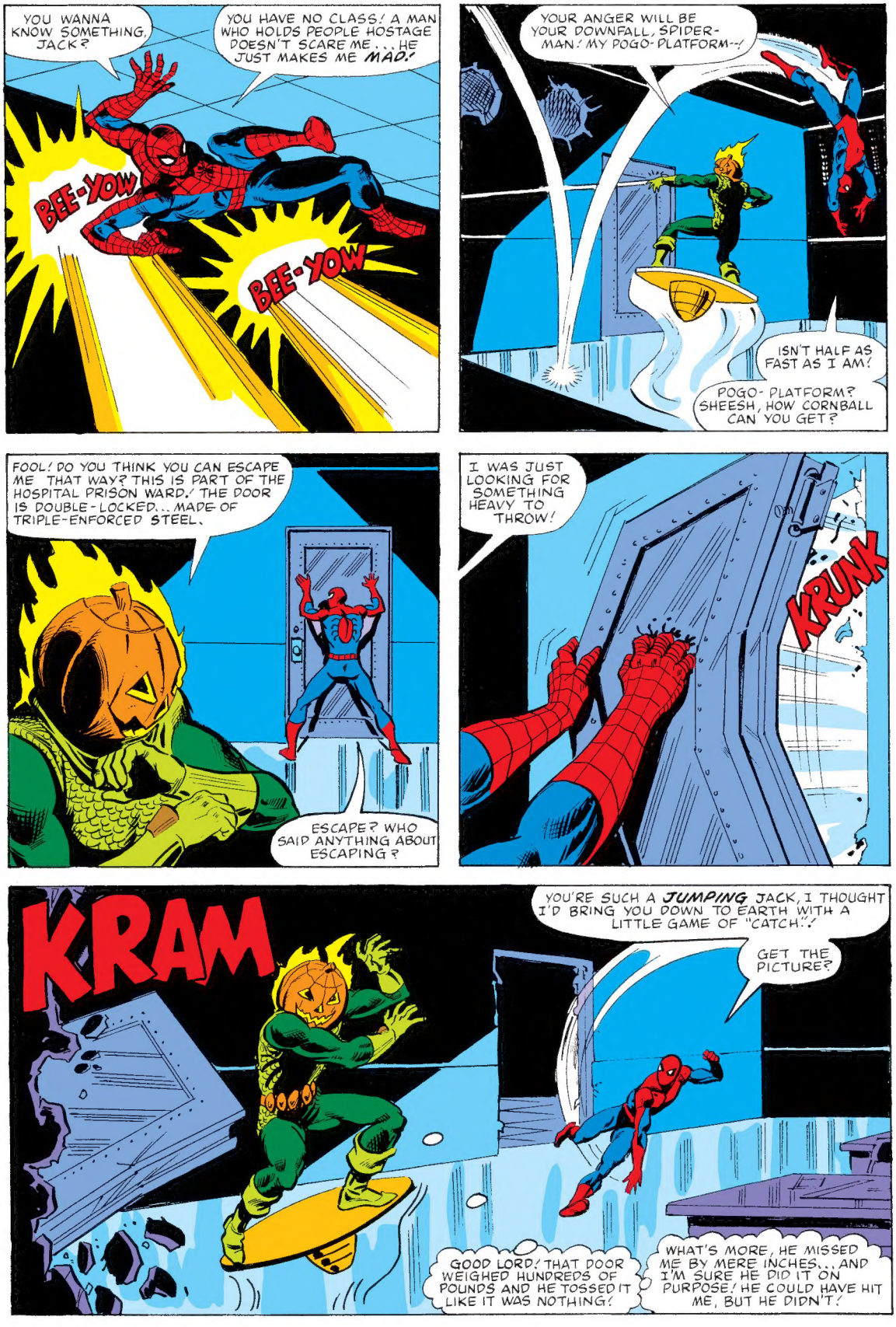
SUDDENLY...
AW, NOT THE OLD "LIGHTS OUT" ROUTINE! WELL, AT LEAST I WON'T HAVE TO HUNT FOR JACKIE...HE'S PROBABLY HUNTING FOR ME!

I'LL BET HE HAS SOME SORT OF INFRA-RED GIZMO FOR SEEING IN THE DARK!
BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE A HANDY-DANDY SPIDER-SENSE TO TELL HIM WHEN HIS ENEMIES ARE ABOUT TO--

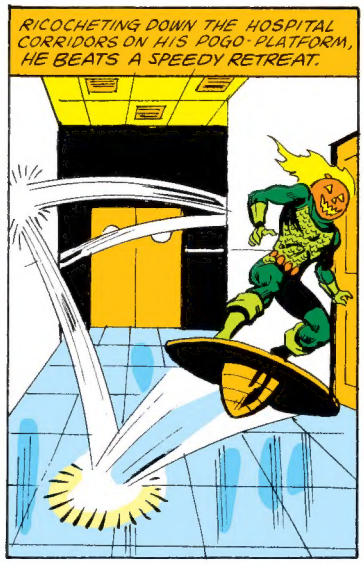

--STRIKE!
CLOSE, JACK--BUT NO CIGAR!
BEF-OOW

YOU ARE AGILE, SPIDER-MAN --AND VERY, VERY FAST! BUT THAT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD AGAINST THE POWER OF JACK O'LANTERN.
WHAT?! OH, I GET IT... I'M SUPPOSED TO BE SCARED, RIGHT?


NICE TRY, JACKIE-BOY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO GO SOME TO TOP THE THREATS I'VE RECEIVED!
I MEAN, I'VE BEEN THREATENED BY THE BEST... DR. OCTOPUS, THE VULTURE, KRAVEN THE HUNTER... EVEN DOC DOOM!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! HE'S LEAPING BETWEEN MY SCISSORING RAY BLASTS SO QUICKLY, I FEEL AS IF I'M MOVING IN SLOW MOTION!

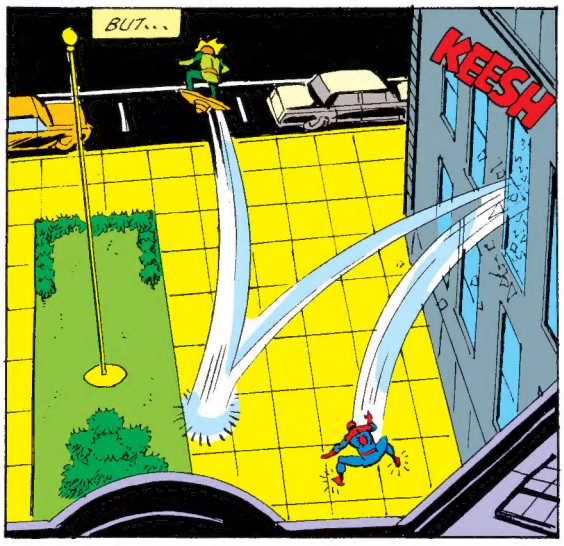

YOU WANNA KNOW SOMETHING, JACK?
YOU HAVE NO CLASS! A MAN WHO HOLDS PEOPLE HOSTAGE DOESN'T SCARE ME... HE JUST MAKES ME MAD!
BEE-YOW
BEE-YOW
YOUR ANGER WILL BE YOUR DOWNFALL, SPIDER-MAN! MY POGO-PLATFORM--!
ISN'T HALF AS FAST AS I AM!
POGO-PLATFORM? SHEESH, HOW CORNBALL CAN YOU GET?
FOOL! DO YOU THINK YOU CAN ESCAPE ME THAT WAY? THIS IS PART OF THE HOSPITAL PRISON WARD! THE DOOR IS DOUBLE-LOCKED... MADE OF TRIPLE-ENFORCED STEEL.
ESCAPE? WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT ESCAPING?
I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR SOMETHING HEAVY TO THROW!
KRUNK
KRAM
YOU'RE SUCH A JUMPING JACK, I THOUGHT I'D BRING YOU DOWN TO EARTH WITH A LITTLE GAME OF "CATCH"!
GET THE PICTURE?
GOOD LORD! THAT DOOR WEIGHED HUNDREDS OF POUNDS AND HE TOSSED IT LIKE IT WAS NOTHING!
WHAT'S MORE, HE MISSED ME BY MERE INCHES... AND I'M SURE HE DID IT ON PURPOSE! HE COULD HAVE HIT ME, BUT HE DIDN'T!

HE'S JUST TOYING WITH ME! I'M NOTHING TO SOMEONE AS POWERFUL AS HIM. I... I..
...I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!


RICOCHETING DOWN THE HOSPITAL CORRIDORS ON HIS POGO-PLATFORM, HE BEATS A SPEEDY RETREAT.

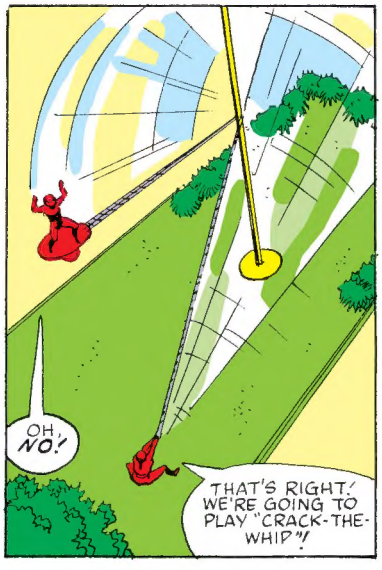
...BUT NOT SPEEDY ENOUGH!
HEY, JACKIE!--WHAT'S YOUR HURRY? DON'T YOU WANT TO PLAY ANY MORE?

FREE! IF I CAN REACH THE SUBWAYS... OR EVEN A SEWER SYSTEM, I CAN GET AWAY! HE'LL NEVER CATCH ME THEN!
KRESH


BUT...
KEESH

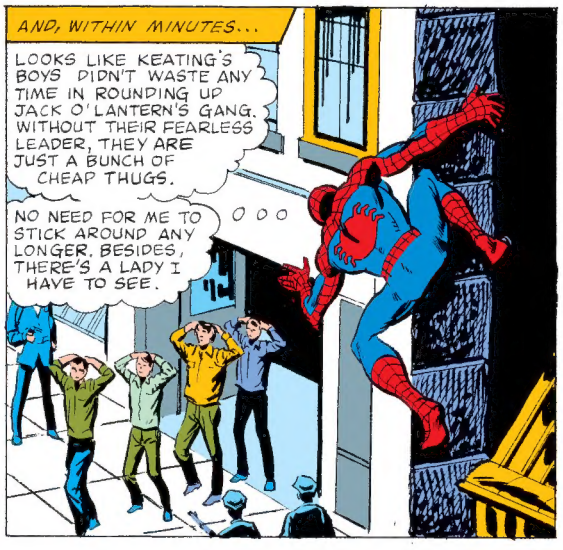
DON'T GO AWAY YET, JACKIE! YOU HAVEN'T SEEN MY NEATEST TOYS!
THWIP

NOW WE CAN PLAY ANOTHER FUN GAME!
CAN YOU GUESS WHAT IT IS? HUH? I BETCHA CAN!
WHAP!


OH, NO!
THAT'S RIGHT! WE'RE GOING TO PLAY "CRACK-THE-WHIP"!

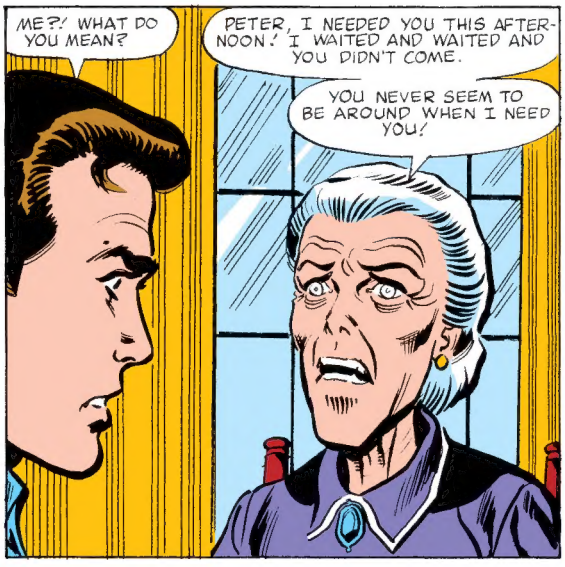
KER-RAK
AND YOU GET TO BE THE WHIP!
AW, YOU'RE NO FUN-- YOU FELL RIGHT OVER! I SUPPOSE THIS MEANS THAT PLAYTIME IS THROUGH!

BUT LET ME TELL YOU, JACKIE... IT'S BEEN FUN FIGHTING A SLIMEY CHARACTER LIKE YOURSELF WHO WEARS A PROTECTIVE HELMET.
I DON'T OFTEN GET A CHANCE TO REALLY HAUL OFF AND PUNCH SOMEBODY, KNOWING THAT I WON'T TAKE THEIR HEAD OFF IF I DO... EVEN IF THEY MIGHT DESERVE IT.
UHHN!

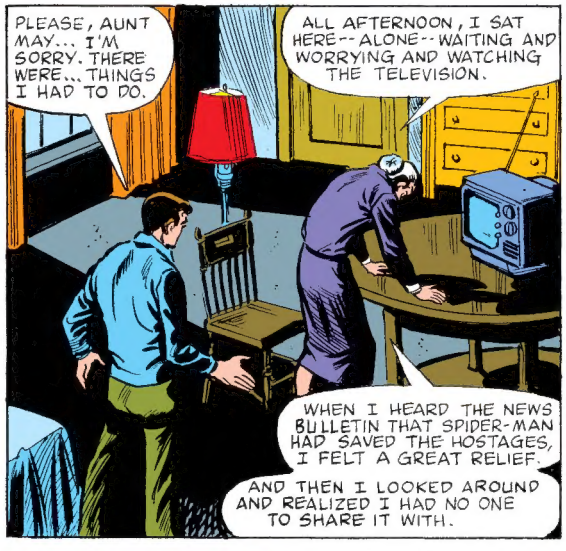

AND, WITHIN MINUTES...
LOOKS LIKE KEATING'S BOYS DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME IN ROUNDING UP JACK O'LANTERN'S GANG. WITHOUT THEIR FEARLESS LEADER, THEY ARE JUST A BUNCH OF CHEAP THUGS.
NO NEED FOR ME TO STICK AROUND ANY LONGER. BESIDES, THERE'S A LADY I HAVE TO SEE.
O O O

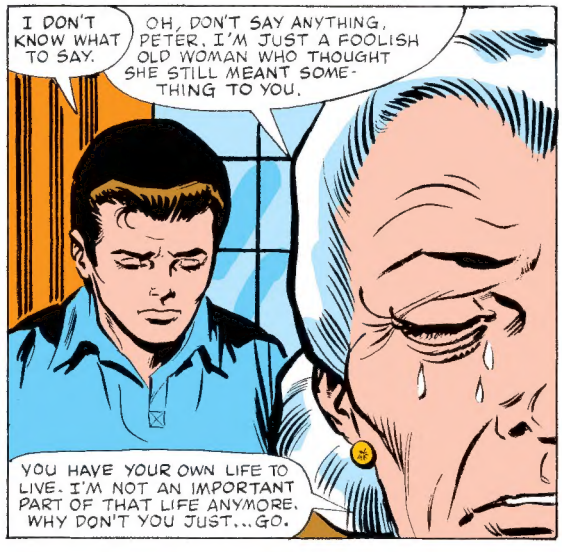
SHORTLY, AT THE RESTWELL NURSING HOME...
HI, AUNT MAY! I GOT HERE AS SOON AS I COULD!
AUNT MAY?

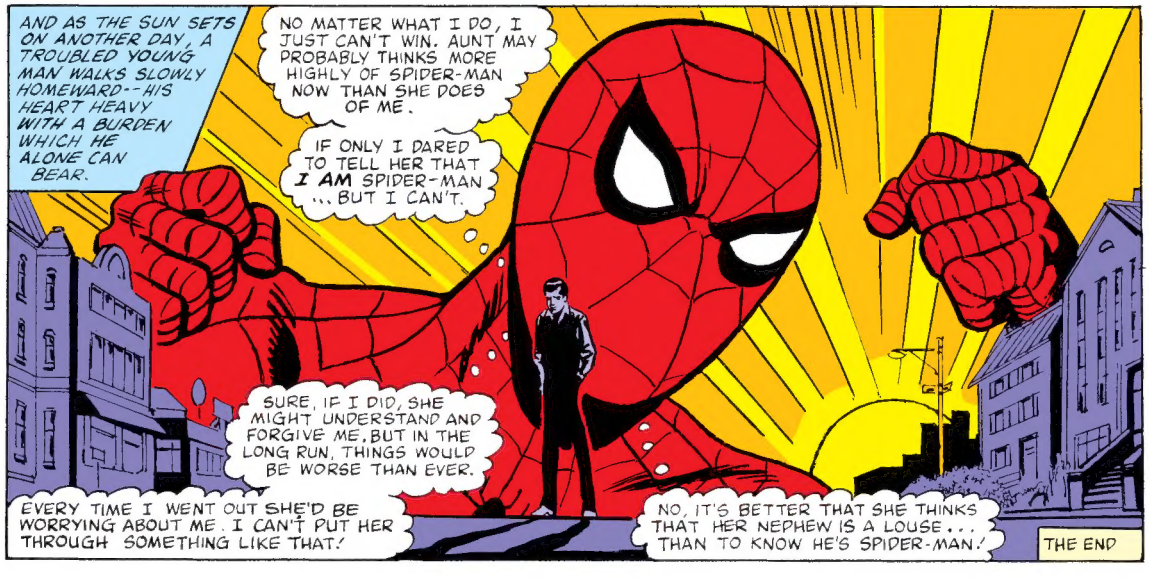
HEY, DRY THOSE EYES... EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT! I HEARD OVER THE RADIO THAT SPIDER-MAN STOPPED THE MEN WHO WERE HOLDING THE HOSPITAL!
ALL THE HOSTAGES WERE RESCUED UNHARMED.
AUNT MAY, DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME? NATHAN'S OKAY. WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU.


ME?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
PETER, I NEEDED YOU THIS AFTERNOON! I WAITED AND WAITED AND YOU DIDN'T COME.
YOU NEVER SEEM TO BE AROUND WHEN I NEED YOU!

BUT, AUNT MAY, SOME THINGS CAME UP! IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO GET HERE.
PETER PARKER, DON'T LIE TO ME! I CALLED YOUR OFFICE AND THAT NICE YOUNG SECRETARY TOLD ME THAT YOU HAD LEFT HOURS AGO!
WHERE WERE YOU?


PLEASE, AUNT MAY... I'M SORRY. THERE WERE... THINGS I HAD TO DO.
ALL AFTERNOON, I SAT HERE--ALONE--WAITING AND WORRYING AND WATCHING THE TELEVISION.
WHEN I HEARD THE NEWS BULLETIN THAT SPIDER-MAN HAD SAVED THE HOSTAGES, I FELT A GREAT RELIEF.
AND THEN I LOOKED AROUND AND REALIZED I HAD NO ONE TO SHARE IT WITH.


I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
OH, DON'T SAY ANYTHING, PETER. I'M JUST A FOOLISH OLD WOMAN WHO THOUGHT SHE STILL MEANT SOMETHING TO YOU.
YOU HAVE YOUR OWN LIFE TO LIVE. I'M NOT AN IMPORTANT PART OF THAT LIFE ANYMORE. WHY DON'T YOU JUST...GO.


AND AS THE SUN SETS ON ANOTHER DAY, A TROUBLED YOUNG MAN WALKS SLOWLY HOMEWARD--HIS HEART HEAVY WITH A BURDEN WHICH HE ALONE CAN BEAR.
NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I JUST CAN'T WIN. AUNT MAY PROBABLY THINKS MORE HIGHLY OF SPIDER-MAN NOW THAN SHE DOES OF ME.
IF ONLY I DARED TO TELL HER THAT I AM SPIDER-MAN ...BUT I CAN'T.
SURE, IF I DID, SHE MIGHT UNDERSTAND AND FORGIVE ME, BUT IN THE LONG RUN, THINGS WOULD BE WORSE THAN EVER.
EVERY TIME I WENT OUT SHE'D BE WORRYING ABOUT ME. I CAN'T PUT HER THROUGH SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
NO, IT'S BETTER THAT SHE THINKS THAT HER NEPHEW IS A LOUSE... THAN TO KNOW HE'S SPIDER-MAN!
THE END